



Head Start Annual Report

2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR



At a Glance

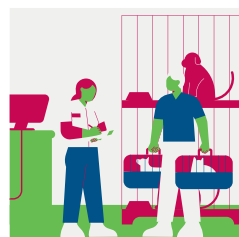
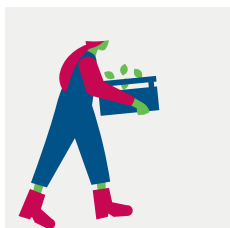
Program
Highlights

Our Year in
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the Future



Education Director's Message



Nick Adams, Ed. Director

"The spirit of our program is one of service and opportunity - we know that the children and families in our communities deserve the highest quality and utmost respect. We're building upon that foundation by streamlining systems so that our people are *effective* instead of *busy*."

While the foundations of our program are built upon positivity and hope - data shape how we do it. We utilize our Community Needs Assessment, Program Information Report, Staff/Parent/Provider Surveys and the results of an annual Self-Assessment. All of these data inform our Program Goals:

- We value our staff and retain them through world-class supports, simple practices, and inspiring opportunities.
- We prepare children for long-term classroom success through prioritizing social, emotional, and self-management skill building.
- Our ERSEA (Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, Attendance) process is structured to reduce barriers, simplify communication channels, and serve families who need it most.

Program Spotlight

Who we are

What makes Head Start unique from other early childcare programs is that we focus on the whole family to ensure that every family has the tools needed to be successful in a school setting. Various program options are available to ensure a good fit for each child.

Our Approach

Early Head Start, Head Start, and the Teenage Parent Program provide comprehensive education, health, nutrition, and parent engagement services to income-eligible children and their families. Our focus is to ensure that children are ready to start school by addressing all aspects of a child's early learning and development.

Our Year in Pictures

Each year in Head Start presents new obstacles and new successes! We choose to see both as opportunities to celebrate and improve. This was our second year in the Grand Rapids Early Childhood Hub and we're starting to utilize this space to full potential.



The Grand Rapids Early Childhood Hub - formerly Murphy School - new Kootasca main offices.

Serving Children and Families



Our teaching staff are some of the most caring and compassionate people you'll meet. They're also innovative, intelligent and willing to meet children and families where they are at.

Whether implementing our Creative Curriculum and Conscious Discipline Framework - or pulling together unique events, field trips and activities - Kootasca Head Start staff are committed to the people they serve.

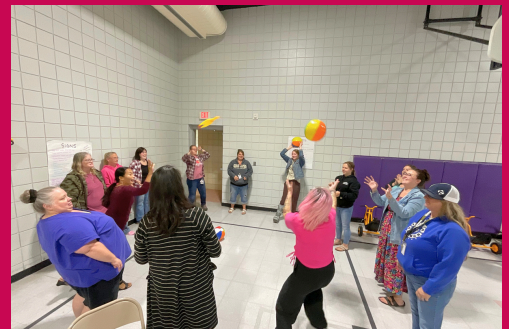
A huge thank you to our kitchen staff, Darla and Learn - who're always dreaming up new ways to get children interested in new foods!

Two years ago, our data presented the Head Start Leadership Team with a stark reality: we needed to be perfected in our appreciation and engagement of Kootasca staff.

We continue to embrace this call to action.

Now, we always start with SPIRIT - or why it matters. We're working hard to create forums and opportunity for teachers to engage in the shaping of our program. We have a long way to go - and we're getting there.

Staff Appreciation and Engagement



Community Outreach and Recruitment



Due to the ever-changing nature of funding in Early Childhood Education, our Head Start program uses Community Needs data to stay up to speed with where families are at and how to best serve them.

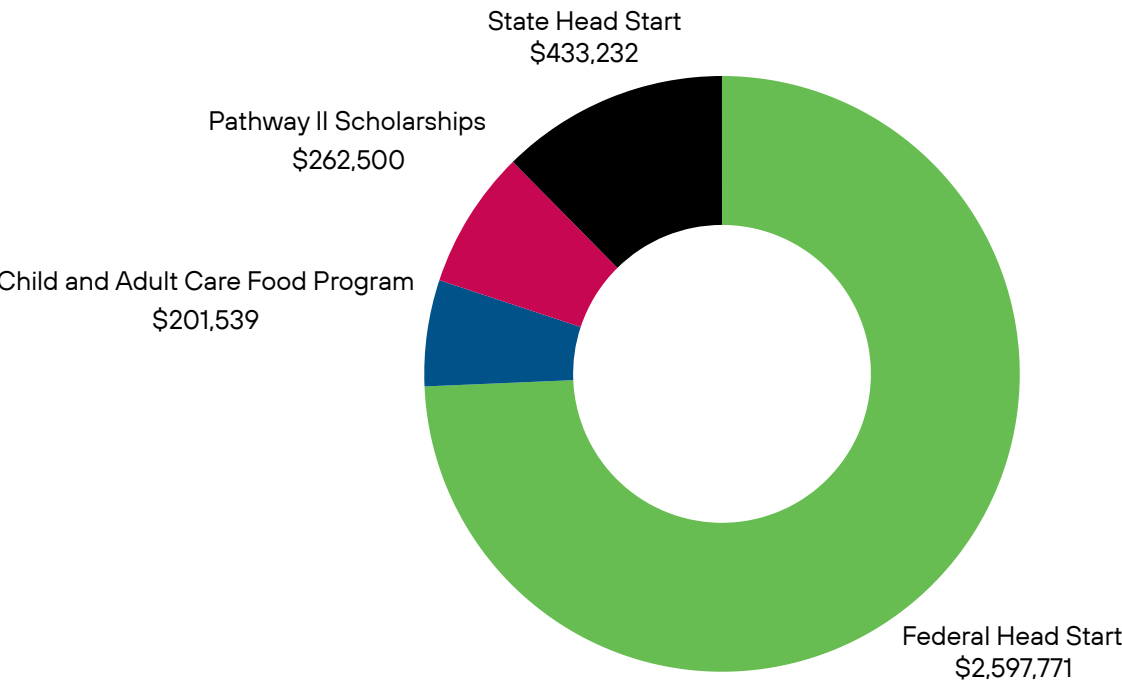
The change is obvious - we are having an increasingly difficult time achieving full-enrollment, with families who qualify for Head Start.

While our outreach and recruitment efforts have been our highest priority, we're seeking innovative new ways serve ALL of the families we can serve. Please share your Head Start success stories far and wide as we continue to seek full enrollment and maximize the number of families benefiting from our program.

Financial Summary

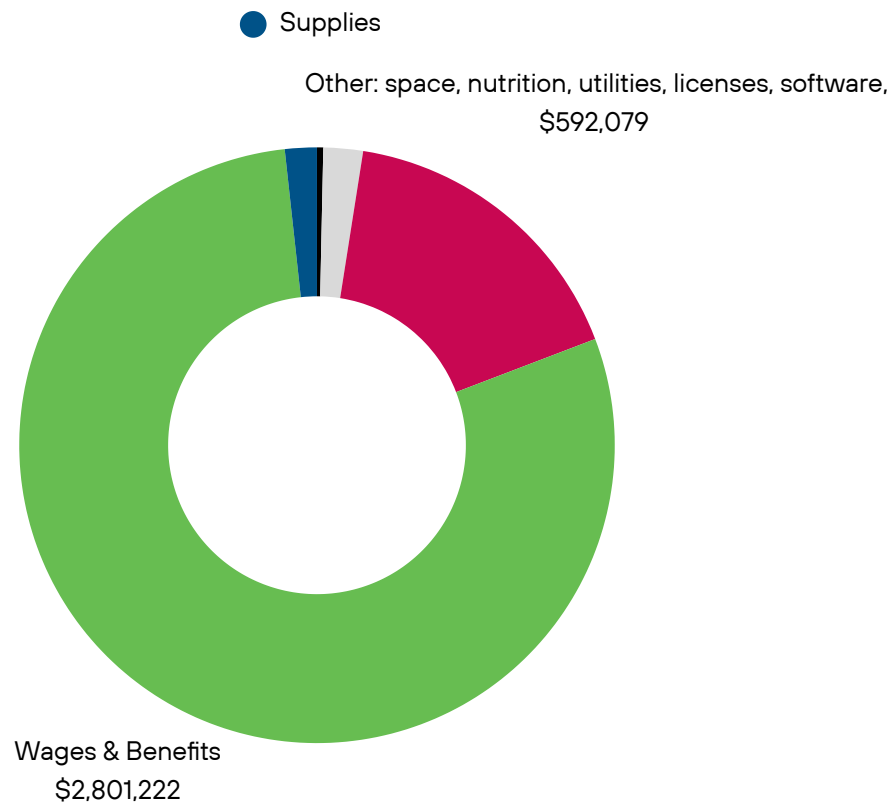
Total Budget: \$3,495,042

Federal Head Start Child and Adult Care Food Program Pathway II Scholarships State Head Start



Total Expenses: \$3,495,042

● Travel ● Contractual ● Other: space, nutrition, utilities, licenses, software, ● Wages & Benefits



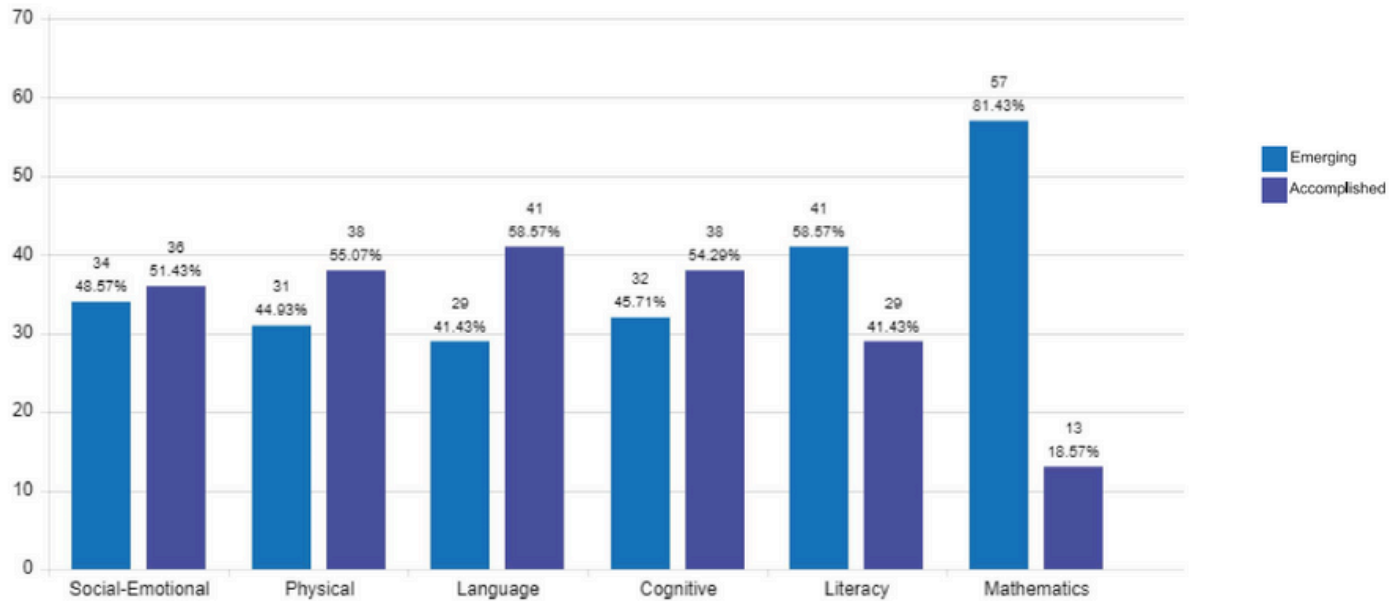
Innovation and Growth

Data tell a story...

Creative Curriculum benefits preschoolers by fostering a well-rounded, developmentally appropriate learning environment that encourages exploration, creativity, and active participation. It emphasizes hands-on, project-based learning where children can engage in activities that promote cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth. By integrating innovative approaches, such as play-based learning and incorporating student interests into the curriculum, it nurtures critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The use of flexible learning materials, technology integration, and collaboration between educators and families allows for a more personalized approach, meeting the diverse needs of children and encouraging a lifelong love of learning.

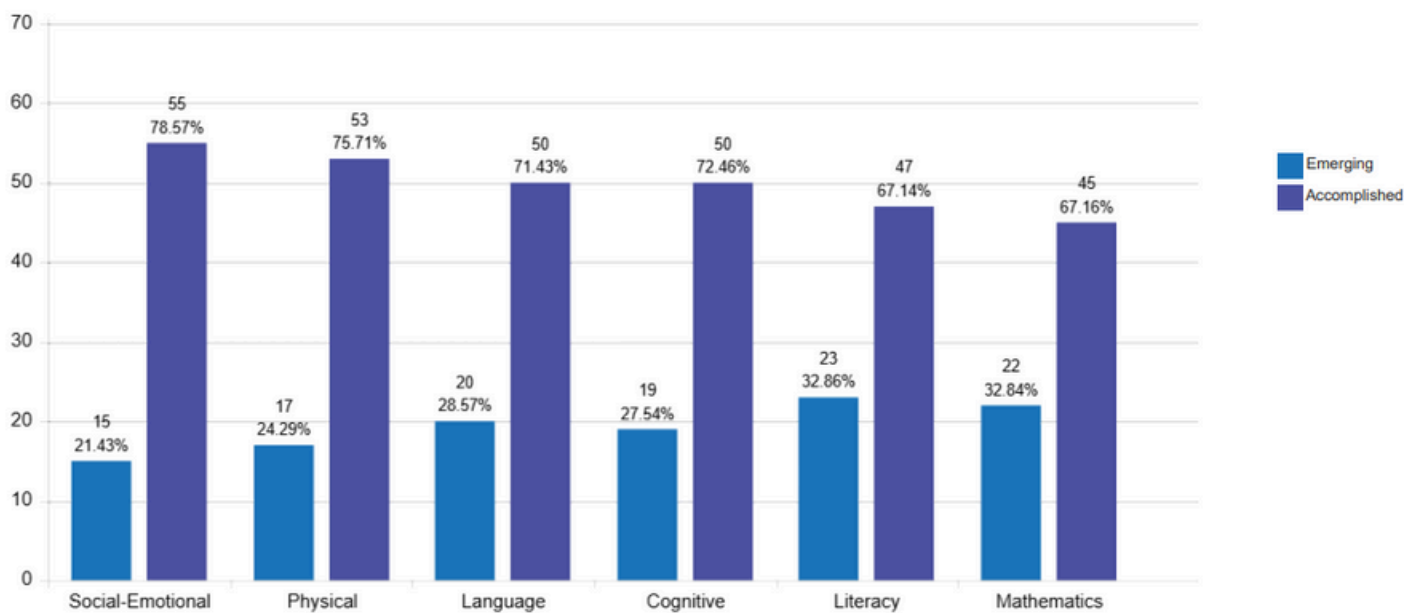
Minnesota Head Start Association - KOOTASCA Community Action, Inc

Fall - Kindergarten Readiness



Minnesota Head Start Association - KOOTASCA Community Action, Inc

Spring - Kindergarten Readiness



Facing the Future

Every child in our program gets **every** service they need. That's why folks at Kootasca Head Start are so passionate about the positive ripples we're creating every day: we get to serve families in need with:

- Dental Exams
- Hearing and Vision Screenings
- Innovative Curriculum and Approaches
- Academic Tracking and Assessment
- 3 Meals a Day
- Navigation to other Kootasca Resources
- Family Services
- Kindergarten Readiness
- Health Services
- Mental Health Services
- Unique Community Engagement
- 100% Free Childcare

Contact

For further information, please reach out to us at HeadStartAdmin@kootasca.org

KOOTASCA COMMUNITY ACTION

"Building Community to End Poverty"

Address: 822 NE 5th Ave. Grand Rapids, MN 55744

Phone: (218) 999-0800

Website: Kootasca.org